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FALL 2016

We're waking up and reaching for sweaters.

Now's the time to go inside and get some fresh ideas for your decor—or even a new place to live! Find modern, classic, and vintage inspiration in Seven Days' quarterly supplement about home design and real estate.

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# Into the Woods



A Brooklyn family settles in rural North Ferrisburgh

STORY BY AMY LILLY  
PHOTOS BY JIM WESTPHALEH

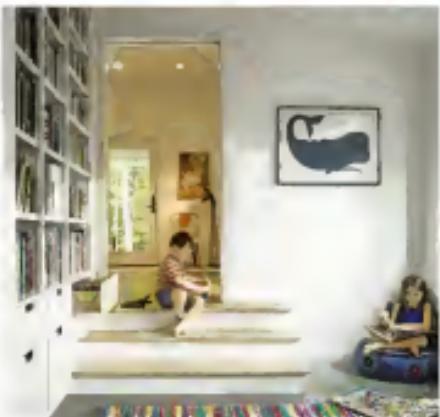
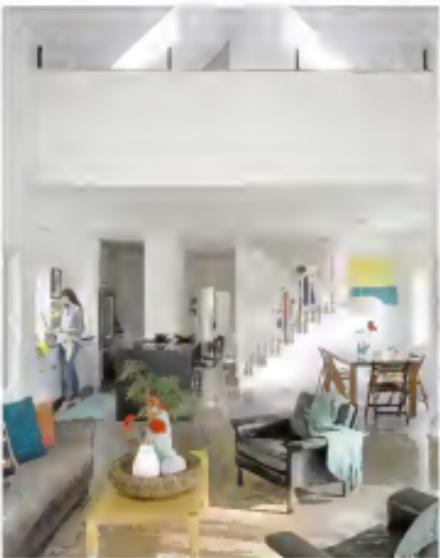
In a remote, wooded spot at the end of a winding dirt lane in North Ferrisburgh sits a house that is intimately familiar to people all over the country. That's because the Knoll House — as its designer, Bristol architect Elisabeth Herrmann, named it — was recently written up on Houzz, the home-design website that reportedly reaches 35 million viewers.

INTO THE WOODS ► P8



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## Into the Woods

Despite its 15 minutes of fame, the house remains a secluded retreat, as this reporter can attest. On a recent sunny afternoon, Herrmann and Nira Griffin, co-owner with her husband, Dylan, showed me around while the Griffins' daughter and son, ages 8 and 3, treated each other and watched television. Sneakers. The dog followed the tour closely.

"Knot" refers to the land formation, not the well-known design company that sells reproductions of iconic modern furniture. But these products would fit comfortably into the house's design aesthetic. Nira, a writer and actor, and Dylan, a photographer, have a preference for white walls and clutter-free living. And while the couple recently launched an online magazine devoted to Vermont living, called State 14, Nira's heritage is part Scandinavian. She informed her Swedish artist mother's taste for design as well as antler-vintage items, including plywood-and-chrome birch stools by Arne Jacobsen and fabrics by Josef Frank.

The couple purchased the undeveloped 10-acre lot in 2008 while they were living in Brooklyn, NY. It was part of a 70-acre, unbroken sheep farm that the previous owners had subdivided into nine parcels. For a few years before the children arrived, the couple vacationed on the wooded property, setting

up a tent on the natural knoll. The living room, the house's focal point, at noon on a Saturday, broad windows on three sides reveal fields and a pond through the surrounding trees.

Discussions about the house's design "started with the land," said Herrmann. Turning to Nira, the architect recalled, "You had done this soft edit [of the land]" based on the advice of Burlington landscape architecture firm Wagner Hopkins, which had designed a carriage nearby.

That helped Herrmann conceive of a structure that would blend with its environment. "We jokingly call it the stick house," she said.

The home's eastern white cedar siding is stained a dark brown to match the trees, and the gray standing-seam metal roof merges with the leaves' shadows. The distinctive siding is designed so that corner eging is unnecessary; the shiplap boards wrap unmitigated around the L-shaped house, as do the panel-width reveals between them.

The Knoll House straddles the line between traditional and minimalist. Its pitched roofline recall New England farmhouses, yet its form contains several cutouts — negative spaces that form the front entry porch and other outdoor living spaces that will soon be equipped with docks. Herrmann said these "bliss" out-of-the-otherwise-simple, rectangular spaces "denneth the beauty."





Trade an open combination of modern and traditional. The double-height living room's end wall contains a single, long, open-story window that's recessed within its peaked wall space. The kitchen is designed with another large window in place of upper cabinets, storage and the fridge are off to the side in a half-like pantry. Yet the staircase, which leads to a master suite and loft, is as traditional as stairs go: oak steps, planks, white-painted spindles, a flat wood handrail. No floating stairs or sculptural balustrades here, though these modern trends wouldn't look out of place.

The interior is 2,800 square feet — modest, but a huge upgrade from the 1,600-square-foot Brooklyn apartment the couple previously shared. "We had boxes stacked up everywhere," Nissa recalls of their New York life. The Griffins moved into their Vernon home two years ago.

The shorter wing of the L leads down three steps to a playroom with a built-in bookshelf, a guest room, and the children's room and bath. In each, windows are either than expected and sit only a few inches above the floor, an Unskilling concession to step outside at any time.

## WE JOIKINGLY CALL IT THE STEALTH HOUSE.

ELIZABETH HERRMANN

The staircase window is square — few windows in the house are alike — and set surprisingly low to the ceiling; it frames a picturesque view to our hearts. Passing it, Nissa commented, "This is one of the things where I'd wake up and say, 'Oh, Lisa, thank you!'

In winter, the homeowners marveled, the snow seem through all those windows merge with the white walls. Best comes from the minimalist concrete floor and a woodstove whose columnar exit pipe adds a sculptural touch.

Herrmann, who mostly designs minidomes, including a 4,000-square-foot "mano-house," commented that she doesn't like to repeat herself: "I love to design specifically for people and their land. If someone were to say 'Can I have those house plans?' I would say 'No!'"

The Knoll House fits its own site and light, she said. "It wouldn't work anywhere else."

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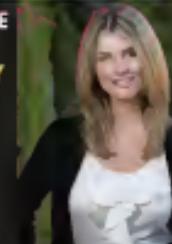


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# Common Ground

*Bayberry Commons hopes to grow Burlington's housing market — and a community*

STORY BY CARMELA SHAPIRO | PHOTOS BY MATTHEW THORSEN

A new complex in Burlington appears to consist of a row of townhouses, each with a unique facade: Some have ocean-blue or yellow siding; others, deep-red brick. They all face a common square that will soon contain green space, community gardens, apple trees and a grilling pavilion. Old-fashioned streetlights, equipped with energy-saving LED bulbs, overlook wide cement sidewalks.

If that sounds like a quixotic clippage, it is. But behind those townhouses cowers a surprise: a single seven-story apartment building divided into 23 units with one or two bedrooms each. All have shiny granite countertops, cubic beige carpeting and ample closet space.

This is Bayberry Commons Apartments, one of the largest housing projects to take shape in Burlington in several years. When it's completed in mid-2013, the 14 residential buildings occupying the former S.D. Ireland brewing plant on Gross Street — just east of Colchester Avenue — will have 332 units available for rent.

Though most of the complex is still under construction, the first apartments opened last month in the two-story townhouse-like structure on the north side of the property. A three-story tower on Monday will add another 30 apartments in November. Three duplexes close to Gross Street won't

occupy now, and three more will open later this year.

Rents range from \$1,480 per month for a one-bedroom unit to \$3,150 for a two-bedroom, two-bathroom duplex with a full basement. The 15 percent of units designated "inclusionary," or affordable under city requirements, will cost between \$1,985 and \$3,175 per month.

All together, Bayberry Commons will resolve a small dent in the chronic rental-housing shortage that has plagued Burlington for at least two decades. Vacancy rates in the city have hovered at or below 2 percent since 2006 and dipped to less than 0.5 percent, except for a peak of 2.7 percent in 2009, according to the city's 2010 Action Plan for Housing & Community Development.

"There is a limited supply of housing units at all levels of the market, and an unusually low vacancy rate encompasses the town," reads the plan. "In addition, our extensive student population creates a significant gap set on Burlington's



housing market. ... Burlington has a significantly higher percentage of renters, and the cost of rent is increasing at a higher rate."

S.D. Ireland's owners had this in mind when they proposed the redevelopment of the property in 2012. Three years earlier, the family-run company purchased competitor S.T. Orenstein in Williston and decided to consolidate its cement operations at one site, leaving the other available for new use.

During a recent tour of the complex, Patrick O'Brien — senior project manager for Bayberry Commons and S.D. Ireland's general manager of construction and development — told *Next*, "We felt that Burlington was lacking a go-to apartment community."

By that, he meant a well-lit, safe,

affordable and self-contained place to live, with gathering spots to encourage social interaction. Here, O'Brien said, "you're going to know your neighbor."

Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger applauded Bayberry Commons as another step toward addressing the "acute need" for more rental housing, which has not kept pace with demand. New rental developments in Burlington must take a certain percentage of units affordable, but any increasing supply of apartments at any price will alleviate demand, and ultimately lead to lower rents across the board, he said.

"There's no doubt that our lack of new supply of rental houses over a sustained number of years is playing a substantial role in driving our affordability crisis," the mayor said.

The S.D. Ireland plant — on a 28-acre industrial swath once frequented by cement and sheep trucks — had long deserved focus. The surrounding residential landscape, Burlington can trace back to Lazarus Sanders in the early 1900s had stagnated. The developer had occupied just 30% of the site, O'Brien said.

From the start, the developer wanted to integrate Bayberry Commons into Burlington's existing urbanized landscape.

"The most important thing was maintaining the neighborhood feel," said Kim Ireland, the company's vice

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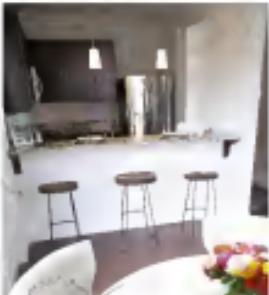
president, who were a hard hit and gloves while helping plant trees in the central square. "It's been industrial for years," she said of the property. "We wanted it to fit in with the neighborhoods around it."

The developer facing Grove Street, for example, is on an easement with steps leading to wide front porches, resembling some of the stately single-family homes in the adjacent Hill section. Inside, the living space spans over one 1,650-square-foot apartment, each an two levels.

A future phase of the project includes a large community center with a game room, fitness center, outdoor swimming pool and commercial kitchens, allowing residents to host parties there. S.D. Ireland hopes these features will give Bayberry Commons an edge over the housing supply shifts and starts to meet demand, forcing landlords to compete for tenants, O'Brien said.

Other selling points: Bayberry Commons Apartments have unusually high nine-foot ceilings and their own washing machines and dryers. Upper units offer balconies big enough to fit a small table and chairs for al fresco dining. And, particularly rare in Burlington housing, the grade of the property allows for underground parking. Garages offer at least one parking space per unit, plus storage spaces for tenants to store bikes and other items.

Connection to the natural landscape is another key component of Bayberry



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**Commons.** Units in the two-story building share an open backyard stretching to the surrounding woods, through which tenants can walk to the Winooski River. A path will make it easier to carry down a fishing pole or kayak, O'Brien said.

In addition to the apple trees planned for the eastern green, S.D. Ireland planted blueberry, raspberry and blackberry bushes around the property. Tenants can pick fresh fruit to supplement their garden-grown vegetables, O'Brien added.

He said Bayberry Commons will target University of Vermont grad students as well as employees of Saint Michael's College and nearby tech



companies, such as MyWebGrocer in Winooski. Any of those tenants could easily bike or walk to work.

That would help to alleviate an anticipated increase in traffic from Bayberry Commons that nearby residents have raised as a concern. Some complained about the project's initial proposed scale and suggested it would snarl an already-congested stretch of road.

In response, S.D. Ireland made several concessions, first reducing the size of the project by about 50 units. The developer paved and added lighting and sidewalks to the Schenectady Park parking lot, across from the park and just north of the Bayberry Commons entrance on Grove Street, and plans to

install two pedestrian crosswalks with the same speed-dashling system used on Fine Street in Burlington's South End.

S.D. Ireland also agreed to extend the now-unfinished sidewalk along Grove Street to the South Burlington town line and install new speed bumps and a digital speed-alarm sign.

"We remain concerned about the ultimate traffic impact," said Richard Michalek, who lives with his wife on Grove Street right next to Bayberry Commons. He emphasized, though, that he appreciated S.D. Ireland's changes, which improved the project from its initial proposal.

Neighbors also worried about Bayberry Commons creating a hub of off-campus housing for college students. That prediction has partly come to pass, with Champlain College leasing 32 of the 46 non-exempted units. The college approached the developer when it needed more incoming students than year than it could house, O'Brien said. It made room by offering upper-classmen apartments there.

So far, chart one housing shortage: Bayberry Commons has helped to solve.

Top left: A smaller legend bar separates the open kitchens from the living rooms. Top right: Saptops at Bayberry Commons look like single family homes. Bottom: Bayberry Commons still under construction.



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# Through the Drinking Glass

A new book illuminates Simon Pearce's influences and design philosophy

BY KICK KARDASHIAN

Most people acknowledge that their parents had some influence on their tastes and preferences. For the glassblower and artist Simon Pearce, the parental effect looms large. Even today, Pearce, 70, can picture almost everything his family sat on and cooked with in his childhood home in southeastern Ireland.

The house itself was a typical Georgia country shingle, square and asymmetrical. Inside, the Pearces used a mixture of traditional and contemporary furniture, glass and cutlery. Pearce did not rebel from these designs; he absorbed them. They now define the hand-blown glassware he sells at his landmark Quechee location and on 500 stores around the United States.

These design roots are the subject of *Simon Pearce: Design for Living*, a new coffee-table book by Pearce's longtime friend and colleague Glenn Strode. Through extensive interviews and photography, the book tells Pearce's life story and conveys his upholding, firmly and admiringly, the well-known Simon Pearce brand.

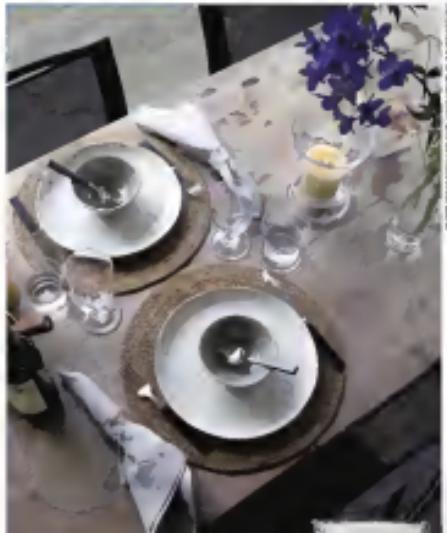
Pearce grew up in Shanesberry, a small town near the sea. His father, Philip, chose to sacrifice instead of staying in London and running the family pottery business. Pearce's mother, Lucy, was one of the first female university professors in Britain. When they moved to the Irish

countryside, they maintained their cultured and sophisticated perspectives but indulged in creative endeavors that find their souls more than their bank account. Philip opened a small pottery studio, and Lucy, in addition to helping with the business, taught herself to cook.

Young Simon seemed to fit in with his parents' second lives much better than their first ones. He has dyslexia and never finished high school, but he always knew he wanted to make things with his hands.

"At first I thought I would make furniture, and then my father's pottery was there, so I thought I'd try that," he remembers. When he was 16, Pearce went to New Zealand for two years to learn pottery, training under the English potter Harry Dean. When he returned to Ireland, he worked for a year with his father before opening his own pottery shop in his hometown.

The medium agreed with Pearce, but he was also anxious to try something



THROUGH THE DRINKING GLASS ■ P. 115



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different from what his father did. He became infatuated with glass during trips to visit his godfather, the artist Patrick Scott, in Dublin. Scott kept a large wooden cupboard in his house filled with Georgian glassware — cups, tumblers and flutes of all sizes. They all had one thing in common: simplicity. Aside from some of the long, thin pieces, the glasses seemed to be clear cousins of the ancient chalice, with wide, sturdy feet and the slightest of curves. Pearce wondered why no one was making glass like that anymore. Then he decided to make it himself.

After spending a few years learning glassblowing techniques and how to build furnaces, Pearce opened stores in Clifton, Dublin and Kilkenny in the 1970s; he also sold pottery made by his father and his brother, Stephen. Business was good, but, according to Pearce, it was frustrating to be an entrepreneur in Ireland in those days. "The phones didn't work, the mail

didn't work, the banks didn't work," he recalls. "That was really why I left."

When Pearce visited Vermont for the first time, in 1980, he was looking for something like Shamburgh in which to live, raise a family and grow his business.

## IF IN 20 YEARS YOU ENJOY IT AS MUCH AS THE DAY YOU BOUGHT IT, THAT IS THE SIGN OF SOMETHING THAT REALLY WORKS.

SIMON PEARCE

saw "the mill in Quechee, which dates to 1860, was the perfect site. It had a stunning location on the Ottauquechee River, where a dam tumbles water and sand onto rocks below. And it could be retrofitted with a turbine to harness the river's energy that would power the glass furnace.

In 1988, Pearce and his wife, Phineas, moved into an apartment on the second floor of the mill and opened a store on the ground floor. Today, the site

includes a restaurant and bar overlooking the waterfall.

Over the past 20 years, Pearce has maintained his style and design ethos, creating pieces that are simple, elegant, handmade and functional. For him,

decade, Pearce is still making glass, but mostly in the winter when the furnace room is a bit cooler. And he enjoys advising his son, Andrew, who makes all sorts of wooden bowls at a shop just a few miles from the Quechee mill.

From the beginning, Pearce has endeavored to make each piece unique in some way — to have the madcap, barely discernible variations that happen with handblown glass. But sometimes, many of the stores that sell his wares don't get the message. "All they want is everything to be identical," he says. "They should let it go." As *Simon Pearce: Design for Living*, through dozens of beautiful photographs and Pearce's own memories, the man is one of a kind. It's no surprise that his glassware always will be, too.

### INFO

*Simon Pearce: Design for Living*, by Glenn Sackler [author] and John Sherman [photographer]. 80 pages. \$60. [simonpearce.com](http://simonpearce.com)



Top center: Kilnhouse House, the Pearce family home in Quechee, Vermont, in the 1980s. Center: One of Simon Pearce's original retail stores, in Killiney, Dublin. Top right: Simon at work in his Bernersbridge workshop in the 1980s. Bottom right: Simon's sons, Andrew (left) and Pearce (right), in Quechee.



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Joseph Wilcox, owner, Deep 6

# Diving Deep

*A South End designer makes old stuff new again*

BY SABIE WILLIAMS



The Burlington furniture and home goods shop Deep 6 is captivating. An air plant floats in an Erlenmeyer flask; Thor's Walrus goes for a ride in a wire basket fastened to the body of a toy bike; a steel tripod becomes an industrial lampstand. These and other whimsical constructions are the hybrid creations of 24-year-old Joseph Wilcox.

He opened the Flynn Avenue store in June with the help of a small business loan. Wilcox, the weathered brick walls, Wilcox displays his innovative handwork alongside ready-to-go finds at modest fads. Think vintage cameras, a repurposed traffic light, military speakers turned into lamps, a curated selection of vintage books and a refurbished cast-iron serving table.

Seated amid trunk-a-tables and fanciful lighting, the blond rasher says he's always been drawn to artifacts of the home. He enjoys what he calls "the essence of everyday life" and seeks to

make beautiful "the things that are there for you, and you use them, but you don't normally think about them."

That attention to detail and passion stems from his eye and also his education. Wilcox, a Vermont native, graduated from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in 2010 with an industrial design degree. One of his teachers at Vermont Commons School, Wilcox notes, had nudged him toward that field. He could have focused on pure fabrication, drawing up completely new items, but instead gravitated toward remaking

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## Diving Deep

found objects, giving them fresh faces and new functions.

Wiles' constructions are inspired by a Vermonters' desire to promote recycling and a fascination with what he calls "schoolhouse aesthetics," as well as classic American design. Consider the numbered locker baskets he uses as wall shelves, or the orange plastic school chairs strung up to a wood table as harpoon legs; stark stress, discounted by their previous owners, shows off clean lines and practical functionality. And both look completely suited to their new medium: art.

At the same time, those slippery plastic chairs will remind some of taking tests in high school. A set of time-harpooned wooden rulers might have been packed from a 1980s classroom. Black-and-white photos, curling at the edges, enhance the vestimentary mirth.

Moments permeate Wiles' work, and he cites one of his favorite film directors, Wes Anderson, as a major influence. "The films" really showcase everyday objects in a simple, artistic way that really shows the true nature of nostalgia," Wiles noted in a press release when he launched his business. In fact, many of Wiles' antiques would be right at home in a film like *The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou*.

That's because the designer has nothing for nautical themes. It's the source of the name Deep 6. Originally a marine term, it denotes anything deeper than six fathoms, below which an object would be difficult to recover. The term became idiomatic over time and is now used as a verb to indicate that something has been moved or halted or is beyond realization.

Now, suddenly, Wiles is reappropriating the term for himself. He's giving trash or abandoned objects a makeover — and, he hopes, new humor. As he puts it, "I try to make everything belong."

Most of the items at Deep 6 are rechristened or found items from flea markets and estate sales, but Wiles also features works by local artists and artisans. Jim Eaton, Laura, has fashioned pillows made from old T-shirts, as well as sophisticated bohemian-style seats and burly covers for bench seats. Colorful folk-art-inspired paintings by Lisa Liffel hang low the walls.

Wiles plans to continue showcasing local artists and, in the future, aims to sell ceramics and plants, too. Meanwhile, he'll keep fishing for cast-off trash and turning it into treasures.

## I TRY TO MAKE EVERYTHING BELONG.

JOSEPH WILES



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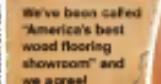
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# House Hunt!

*Following first-time buyers on the search for their dream homes*

BY CAROLYN FOX

If you've been through the process, you know there's a learning curve, complete with near misses, drama and mystifying paperwork along the way. If you're starting to think about getting out of that rental and buying your own home, our House Hunters just might have some eye-opening tips for you.

## Home at Last: After a Yearlong Search, Jessica and Nick Settle in Waterbury

When Jessica Hender Nelson and Nicholas Adams got married in August 2016, they swapped hopes and dreams for their life together. Key to their vision was an old house, something with character and charm in which they'd share their shared future. The young thirty-somethings wasted no time and started house hunting later that month.

Nest first spoke to Jessica just a couple of months into their search, which had already been an emotional roller coaster ride. She and Nick had immediately fallen for a great house on two acres in Georgia that had all the original details the architecture-loving couple had hoped for: exposed beams, hardwood floors, crown moldings, a fireplace. But the inspection revealed an extra \$25,000 of necessary renovations. The sellers weren't willing to negotiate, so Jessica and Nick had to back out of the deal. "It was overwhelming," Jessica told Nest shortly after, adding that "nothing else seems to compare."

Now, having looked at roughly 80 houses in the last year, the couple has finally found everything they want in a three-bedroom New England-style home in Waterbury built in 1894, the well-renovated, move-in-ready structure sits on nearly an acre of land within walking distance to downtown.

### Their biggest obstacles:

**IT'S A SELLER'S MARKET.** "Jessica and Nick's Waterbury home sits on the market for just 11 days now and in that time it received more offers. It just speaks to the scarcity of a home in this condition...and the nature of the market right now," says Jessica. "There would be 10 buyers for every one of those homes [that we liked]."

**HOME TALKS.** "We ended up spending much more time than we thought we were going to spend," says Jessica, who notes that at one point they considered buying from a friend to find something more affordable. "We realized on this search that we had to go over budget to get what we wanted."

**PREFAB IS THE FAIR.** "Sawyer homes had a style and feel we were looking for," says Jessica,

who limited the search to anything built before 1960. "They just don't have the character that we're looking for. That was the one thing we weren't willing to compromise."

### Their top tips:

**GO THE DISTRICT.** Waterbury went in Jessica and Nick's original search zone, but bordering their field brought them more options and more affordable price

And they found it just in time. "We came to a verbal agreement on another house in Essex," she explains, "and that was also an old farmhouse, [but it] needed to be completely gutted and renovated. We were just about to sign the paperwork when this popped up."

Jessica was not of mind, but Nick told her that "this looked perfect, much better than the house we were about to buy," she recalls. "He went the next day, and there were almost 30 people looking at the house. We were nervous, but this was exactly what we were looking for, so we decided we should at least try."

The house was listed at \$289,000, which was within their range. But they knew they'd need to put in a higher offer to stand out. They also waived all of the inspections in order to be competitive. It worked. The seller accepted, and, following the appraisal, the couple will move in early October.

"This is surreal," says Jessica. "We just can't wait to move and get settled and entertained. I feel like we're starting the next chapter, and this is the perfect place to do it."

Thanks for sharing their story with Nest, we're giving Jessica and Nick a one-year home design premium and \$500 gift certificate from Showplace Kitchen Bath & Laundry.

tips — without adding too much drive time to Burlington.

**PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE.** "If you have the luxury of time patient, be patient," advises Jessica. "Because you never know whom the right home will come on the market. I just think there's good that we didn't consider for a lot of reasons, we were considering set backs. We did end up getting something for much."

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# View Finder

*From bucolic landscapes to sleek resorts, photographer Jim Westphalen gets the picture*

BY RACHEL ELIZABETH JONES



At Edgewater Gallery's Mill Street location in Middlebury, Jim Westphalen's photographs seem to open like windows onto Vermont's crumbling, leaning and sagging vernacular architecture. The Shelburne artist's solo show, titled simply "vanish," elevates the documentation of New England's dilapidated barns and industrial relics to the level of rich, intimate and astoundingly sharp portraiture. Westphalen's sophistication results from 30-plus years as a commercial architectural photographer.



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"Even as a kid, when we traveled to New England, it held this certain mystique to me," he says. "The barns, the houses, the old outbuildings — I've always had an affinity [for them]."  
He describes himself as a minimalist, like maybe "I was born in the wrong century."

Westphalen was born on Long Island in New York — in the 20th century. He majored in marine biology in college and, as a professional photographer, considers himself "pretty much self-taught." He learned his trade by attending seminars in New York and during an early three-year stint as an assistant to a portrait photographer.

In 1995, Westphalen and his wife moved to Lexington for the first time; they moved to Shelburne the following year. "I knew I couldn't be specializing in *any* one thing," he says, "because I had to make a living." His commercial work now spans interior and exterior architecture, landscapes, lifestyle, and fine dining, and has been featured in *Design New England*, *New England Home*, *EatingWell* and *Vermont Life*, among other publications — including *Neat*.

Westphalen's attraction to chaotic landscapes contributes to his reputation as a conversely oriented architectural photographer. "I love landscapes, and, when you're shooting that kind of photography, you include the landscape as well," he says. "When I started

working for architects and designers, it really clicked."

Regardless of subject matter, Westphalen explains, "It comes down to composition and light. I shape a photograph, whether it's a plated dish or an interior, with light."

Resorts, he notes, "are where I get to use my corporate bag of tricks."

That makes sense, since generations of the getaway experience generally include sweeping vistas, lush interiors, relaxed guests and enticing dishes of food.

The photos in "marsh" are in many ways the polar opposite of the images that grace glossy magazine pages and marketing materials. No one would shell out hundreds of bucks to spend the night in, say, a partially collapsed circa-1860 brick house in

Shelburne or an abandoned Salisbury dairy barn that is "no longer structurally sound." Each of the images in the exhibition is accompanied by a description of the building's history, giving the works additional depth. "I wonder what the people were like there, what the history was, what the structure was used for," Westphalen says. "I always have those questions in my head."

The window-like quality of the photographs is the result of extra creative decisions, beginning with the digital image itself. "The pixel formation on the sensor itself has a certain look," Westphalen explains. Instead of using glossy paper, he chose to print the

images on watercolor paper to evoke "a painterly feel," he says. The works are mounted like canvases, without glass. "It brings the viewer in — you can really check out the detail," Westphalen says.

His works convey the non-optional moment of creating a man hall when the light is just so and encouraging a momentary, mindless zone. Though the images can be a bit melancholic, Westphalen masterfully captures the dignity of his building subjects.

The photographer describes mounting "works" as "a bit of a risk,"

saying that he wondered, Is it just me? Is anybody else going to get this? But viewers' responses to the show have set his mystique to rest. "I found it has really resonated," Westphalen says. 

## INFO

**Jan Westphalen's "marsh"** is on view through September 30 at Edgewood Gallery at Middlebury Fells. [edgewoodgallery.ca](http://edgewoodgallery.ca), [janwestphalen.com](http://janwestphalen.com)

Courtesy from top: "Shelburne Abandoned II" (left) Site F private residence, Vermont.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM WESTPHALEN

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM WESTPHALEN

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**Parents:** Kele and Chris Bourdeau  
**Kids:** Seal, Finn, and Zac, 3

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# Batcave Bedroom

*Superhero-inspired  
DIY décor for kids*

BY ALISON NOVAK

## Budget-Friendly Touches

- Bourdeau bought the mural paint on sale at Lowes. The police hat, used for the light beams and windows, came from the excess shelf and cost less than a dollar.
- Instead of lamps hanging in the corners of this room, she got three strings of fest lights—some from a dollar store.
- Bourdeau pulled apart a spray-painted black t-shirt she'd got for 16 cents at a donation store for Halloween, and she added the several costumes to the wall with poster putty.

When Kele Bourdeau moved into a house in Burlington's New North End two years ago, she wasn't a fan of the wood paneling covering many of its walls. In the living room, she painted the planks a soft gray and was surprised by how much that lightened up the space.

She took a similar, bolder approach in the bedroom shared by her sons, Finn, 7, and Zac, 5. Inspired by their love of the 1960s "Batman" TV series, Bourdeau painted a Gotham-style landscape with bright yellow windows. She covered them with patching with purple and black vertical stripes. Light beams bearing Bat-Signals emanate from two of the skyscrapers. Along the rays of light, Bourdeau used glow-in-the-dark paint to spell out her sons' names—a fun feature when it's time for lights out.

Bourdeau—who took art classes in college—did the mural herself. Painting, she says, provides her with a "creative release." She let her first grader and preschooler pitch in, even though it meant a less-than-perfect paint job in some spots.

The caped-crusader motif extends to other parts of the room. Roman-striped blankets and sheets adorn the twin beds, and a movie-looking bat light served as Big Lots hangs on the wall. A bright purple blanket, learned by the boys' grandmother, adds a personal

touch. And there are plenty of Batman toys scattered around, including a plastic Batman and a Joker alarm clock Finn got for his seventh birthday.

But not everything adheres to the theme. There's an easel poster on the wall, and Superman stickers are sternly placed inside each Bat-Signal.

Bourdeau's philosophy: "When it's your room, you can do what you want."

This article originally appeared in Kids VT in March 2016.

# In Your Element

Rich Cook & Family, Colchester, Vermont  
Mid-Century Enthusiast, Child Advocate, Father

We have known Rich and his discerning taste, for over 10 years. His search for a home provided an opportunity and a challenge: the need for a safe place to raise his family, an inspiring place to work, and the perfect backdrop for his mid-century collection. At Element Real Estate, we understand that home is where form and function meet in perfect harmony. Home is an expression of who you are and how you live. [#yourelement](#)



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